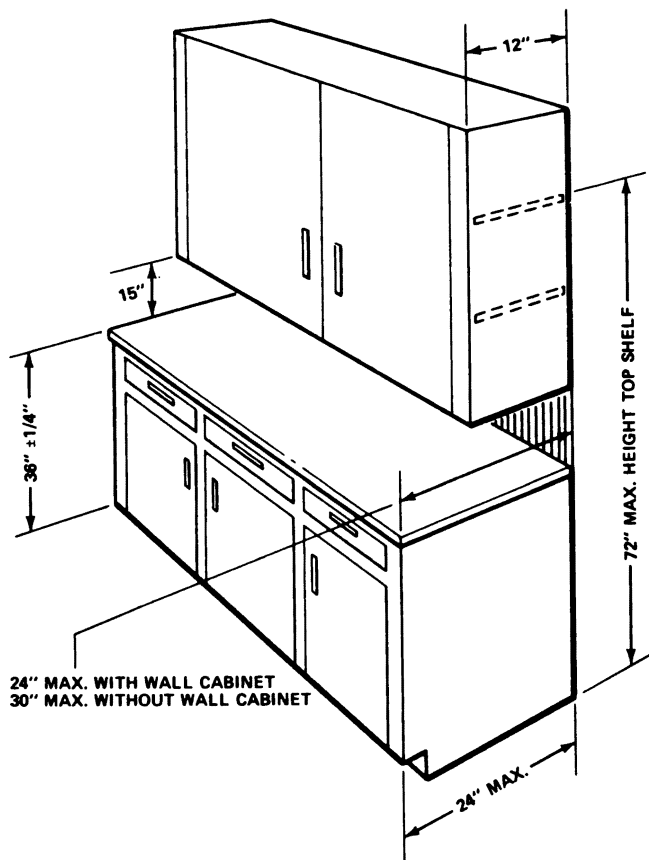


Safe Kitchens ● ● ● Cabinets

The incidence and severity rates of home accidents associated with kitchen cabinets are relatively low. However, as a major component of a major activity area of the home, cabinets deserve appropriate attention during the planning, design, and construction stages. The size, number, and location of cabinets should be carefully determined while the kitchen is being designed. A high degree of craftsmanship is required during the construction and installation of cabinets to ensure their safe and easy operation. The presence of base cabinets exceeding 24 inches in depth makes it difficult for the occupant to reach objects in the rear of the wall cabinets. This inconvenience may force the occupant to use chairs, stools, or other makeshift methods of reaching the uppermost cabinets.



Example of the proper dimensional limits and relative placement of kitchen base cabinets and wall cabinets.



The accessibility of top shelves in wall cabinets determines their relative safety. Climbing to reach a top shelf may result in an accidental fall.

Studies show that the impulsive use of available furnishings for climbing contributes to many accidents in the home. For these same reasons top shelves of wall cabinets should not be placed more than 72 inches above the floor.

Cabinets that are installed too low can be a potential hazard. Cabinet counter levels should be flush with the installed appliances to provide a smooth, clear work area. Physiological studies show that countertops that are 36 inches above the floor provide a convenient, efficient level for the type of activities normally performed in the kitchen. Manufacturers of kitchen appliances and fixtures usually design their products for this level of operations.

Base cabinets and countertops should not be more than 24 inches in depth if there are wall cabinets located above them. Otherwise, the width of the base cabinet presents an obstacle to the individual using the wall cabinet.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

For safer usage of kitchen cabinets and counters, the following recommended dimensions are presented:

- **Countertop depth with wall cabinet above - 24 inches maximum.**
- **Countertop depth without wall cabinet above - 30 inches maximum.**
- **Countertop height above floor - $36 \pm 3/4$ inches.**
- **Mix center countertop height may be above floor — $32 \pm 3/4$**
- **Base cabinet depth - 24 inches maximum.**
- **Wall cabinet depth - 12 inches maximum.**
- **Wall cabinet top shelf height above floor - 72 inches maximum.**
- **Trim used on counter top edges shall be free of all sharp edges, burrs, and points.**

Before building, consult the BOCA code.

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